

Determining Importance	<i>TIME For Kids “Amazing Helen Keller”</i>
Objectives:	<p>We want students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognize and understand what a detail is. • distinguish important information from interesting details. • code important information in the text with a star.
Materials Needed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Time for Kids “Amazing Helen Keller” poster * Two-column Interesting Details/Important Information Anchor Chart * A sample Braille text, if possible * Student copy of “Amazing Helen Keller” text from A Source Book of Short Text, pg 13-16, 20 copies * Post-its

Time	Activity
15 min.	<p>Opening of the Day and Independent Reading -</p> <p>As students enter, they will begin with 10 minutes of independent reading time. Opening - students sitting in a circle up close. Use this time to review the schedule for the day and build engagement and motivation.</p>
20 min (total)	<p>Read Aloud/Shared Reading (whole group)</p> <p>(explicit instruction) - This is where teachers connect and engage students' interest and activate and build their background knowledge, finding out what they know. Teachers use this time to think aloud, modeling and demonstrating the "inside" story of reading mentor texts. Students enter in by turning and talking and "holding" their thinking on sticky notes.</p>
10 min	<p>Connect & Engage:</p> <p>[Pass out individual copies of the “Amazing Helen Keller” article.] <i>Look at this article about a very famous person named Helen Keller. You may have heard of her before. Scan the pictures and skim the words to get an ideas about her. When I say scan and skim, I mean look over the pages. Don’t try to read it all. Take a look at the title, the photographs, and the captions.</i> [Kids skim article.] <i>Turn to each other and talk about what you learned about Helen Keller from looking at the article.</i> [Kids turn and talk for half a minute or so as teacher crouches down and listens. Then turn to the group.] <i>Who has some thoughts?</i> [Students share thoughts.]</p> <p><i>That’s right. It even says that right here under the title:</i></p> <p><i>Amazing Helen Keller. She was blind and deaf, but that did not stop Helen Keller from doing great things! Imagine that. Not being able to hear or see. However, it sounds like she didn’t give up even though she couldn’t see or hear.</i></p>

5 Min.

Let's look at the back page. Maybe you can spell something with your hands in sign language. Try spelling your name with a partner. [Kids should make letters in sign language and attempt to spell their names. After a few minutes, call them back together.] *How many of you figured out how to spell your name? Sign language is one way people who are deaf communicate. Helen Keller was deaf. She couldn't see, either. I wonder how she communicated with people, being deaf and blind. We will be reading more about Helen Keller in just a little while.*

Model:

When writers write nonfiction, they include a lot of details to make the writing interesting. A detail is a little bit of information about something. When writers write about a famous person, as this writer did, they usually include details, such as when the person was born, what the person looked like, and things such as that. These details make the article more interesting, but the details are not the most important information. For instance, if I say, "Jack is one of the kindest people I know. He always goes out of his way to help people. His shoes are brand-new." Which is the most important information and which is a detail? Turn to each other and talk. [Kids turn and talk.]

When we are learning about something, we can't remember all of the information that we come across. We have to try to figure out what information is the most important. We have to try to separate the interesting details from the more important ideas because we want to remember the important information. Let me show you how it works. [Point to the Interesting Details/Important Information Anchor Chart.] *I have this two-column Anchor Chart titled **Interesting Details/Important Information**. This article is full of photos of Helen Keller at different times of her life. I am going to read the beginning of the article and show you how I decide which information is a detail and which is a more important idea. I will jot the detail in the Interesting Details column and the important information in the Important Information column.* [Read the beginning of the article.]

Helen Keller was born more than 120 years ago. She became blind and deaf when she was just a baby. A special teacher helped her learn to read and speak. Helen did not let anything stand in her way!

OK, let me think this through. "Helen Keller was born more than 120 years ago." Hmmm, that's a long time ago, but I am not sure that is the most important idea. I think that is more of an interesting detail. Being blind and deaf is important information about Helen Keller, because that is one of the things we remember about her, not when she was born, but that she was blind and deaf and never let it stand in her way. That is definitely important! So I am going to write "Born 120 years ago" in the Interesting Details column and "Helen Keller was blind and deaf, but she didn't let anything stand in her way" in the Important Information column. Does this make sense?

5 min.	<p><i>Turn to each other and talk about the difference between interesting details and important information.</i> [Kids turn and talk.]</p> <p>Guide: <i>Let's try sorting together. Look at this photo of Helen when she was 39 years old. The caption says:</i> <i>Helen loved horseback riding. She believed that blind and deaf people could do almost anything.</i> <i>Turn to each other and talk about what you think the most important information is.</i> [Kids turn and talk as teacher listens] <i>What do you think?</i> [Students share important information and interesting details while teacher probes for reasoning.] <i>Let's record these interesting details and important information on our Anchor Chart. I am going to put a star on a post-it next to the most important information in the caption of this photograph.</i> [Hand out Post-its and pencils, then show kids how to draw a star. Give them time to practice drawing them.] <i>Ok, I am going to draw a star on a Post-it and put it right next to the part of the caption that says "<u>She believed that blind people could do almost anything</u>" since I think that is really important. I may draw a picture or write a few words about what I think is important, too. If you agree that sentence is the most important information in this part, go ahead and mark it with a star.</i> [Kids draw a star on a Post-it and put it next to that part of the text.]</p>
Time (20 min. /group) 60 min total.	<p>Fluency Often students move into pairs (fluency partners) or small groups to deepen and apply their learning.</p> <p>Independent Reading Students will engage in independent reading, making connections to the text, jotting down interesting words and adding to their journal.</p> <p>Small Group Instruction – mini-lesson</p> <p>-----</p>
10 min	<p>Small Group Instruction <i>Ok, now you get a chance to try this. With a partner, go through the article together. Talk about what you think is most important and code it with a star or asterisk.</i> [while kids begin, teacher confers with pairs.]</p>
10 min	<p><i>Teacher asks partners questions to probe discussion related to important details.</i> [Sometimes when we learn something new, it becomes important to us because we never knew it before. Do you think the fact that she has her eyes open could be a detail? Remember, we learned that details give us a little bit of interesting information. What do you think is important here? What most important, do you think? Where would you draw your star?]</p> <p><i>I am handing out bookmarks to each of you. I want you to write the words: What's Important? on the bookmark. This week as you read your take home books I want you to think about what you learned and share something from your take home books that you feel is important with someone at home.</i></p>
15 min.	Recess/Snack Break

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